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ABSTRACT

The ethnic heritage of the state of Iowa is explored in this theme issue of Iowa's children's history magazine, "The Goldfinch." Through the numerous activities, photographs, games, and articles, answers to such questions as: Why did people from different ethnic groups come to Iowa? and What challenges have ethnic groups faced? begin to emerge. It is emphasized that an examination of children's ethnic roots helps them to understand who they are. (DB)

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The Goldfinch

Iowa History
for Young People
Volume 12, Number 4
April 1991

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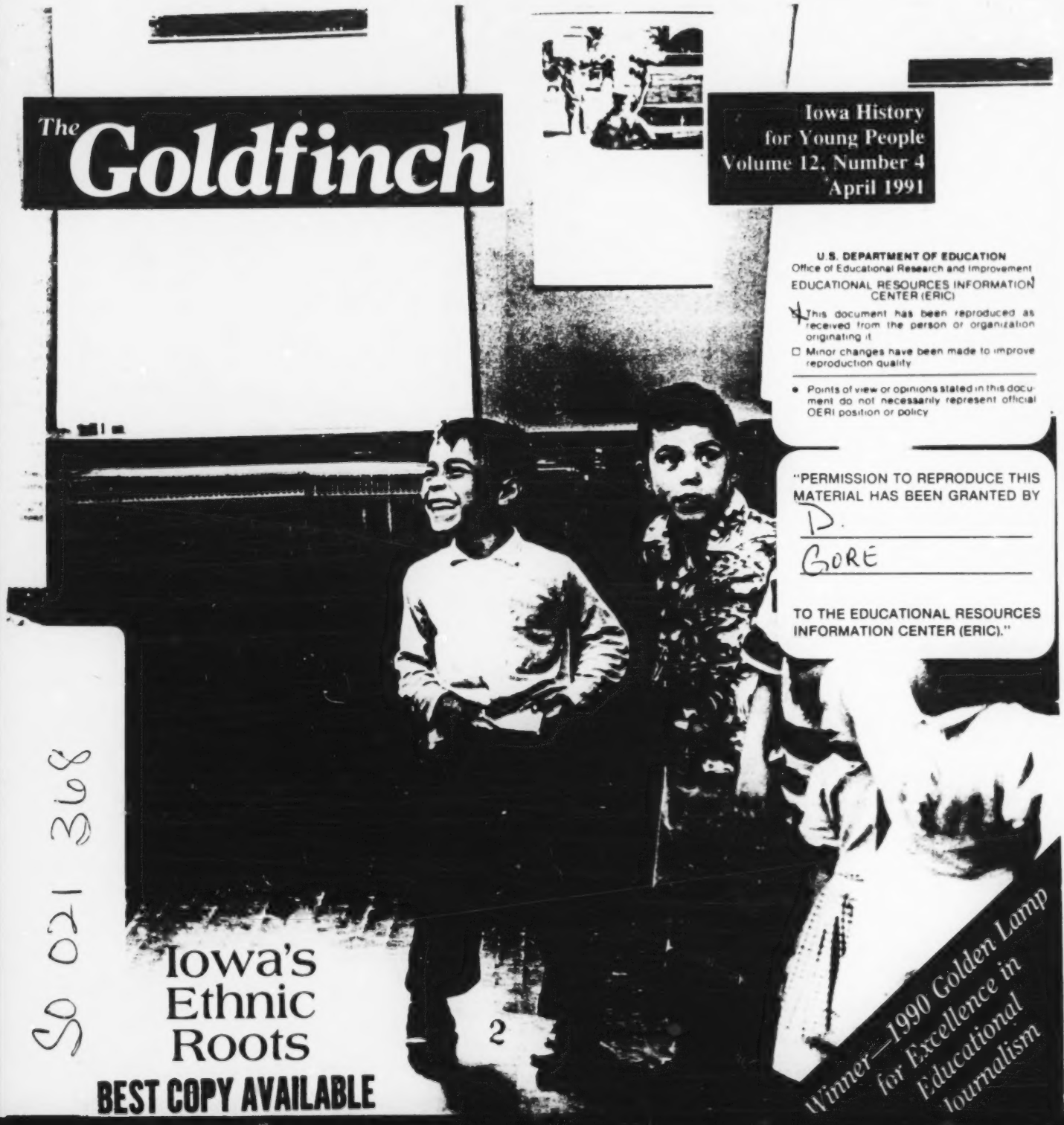

Iowa's Ethnic Roots

SO 021 368

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Winner—1990 Golden Lamp for Excellence in Educational Journalism

The Goldfinch

Iowa History for Young People

Volume 12, Number 4
April 1991

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ON THE COVER: Mexican-American children playing at the Muscatine Child Care Center and School in 1962. Migrant children came to Iowa with their families to help harvest vegetables. Photograph from the Joan Liffring-Zug Collection, State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City.

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Iowa's Salad Bowl

SHSI, Iowa City

Two Mesquakie girls pose with two visitors.

WHAT GOES INTO a salad? A hodge podge of ingredients—lettuce, tomatoes, maybe some onions, sprouts, sunflower seeds, cheese, carrots. Each part of a salad keeps its special flavor, but tossed together they make a great meal!

Iowa is like a big salad bowl. Iowans have varied backgrounds, families, ways of life, common interests, and traditions. Our histories are unique because we come from different places.

Another way to describe Iowa's salad bowl is that it is made up of different ethnic groups. Dictionaries define an ethnic group as "a group of people with similar traits, customs, and history." Think of all of the different kinds of ethnic groups that live in Iowa today—Native Americans, German-Americans, African-Americans, Irish-Americans, Danish-Americans, Lebanese-Americans, and Asian-Americans (just to name a few). Your ethnic roots are important in helping you understand who you are.

At the turn of the century, some historians called the United States (including Iowa) a giant melting pot. The melting pot became a symbol that represented America. Millions of people from all over the world came here, met, and became "Americans." Some people thought you lost your own identity when you became an American just like the ingredients in a pot of stew—carrots, meat, potatoes, and onions—often become so blended that they lose their individual flavoring. Many **immigrants** [people who come to a new country to live] gave up many of their traditions such as native languages, clothing styles, and hobbies and crafts to be more like other Americans.

In this issue of *The Goldfinch*, we'll explore Iowa's ethnic roots. Why did people from different ethnic groups come to Iowa? What challenges have ethnic groups faced? How do they celebrate their ethnic heritage? We'll look at how the many peoples of Iowa have let go of some of their traditions and kept their most beloved.

Why they came

Long before Iowa opened to European-American settlement, Iowa was inhabited by

Art by Jenny Koon

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SHSI, Iowa City

A Black American couple pose near their home.

Native Americans. The Sauk and Mesquakie lived along the Mississippi River. Moved by the federal government into Iowa from Illinois in 1831, they were again forced to move to Kansas. In 1855, they bought land near Tama and returned to Iowa. Today the Mesquakie tribe still lives in what is known as the Mesquakie settlement.

Beginning in 1833, hundreds of thousands of people came from the eastern United States and from foreign lands to settle in Iowa. Immigrants of different ethnic groups came to Iowa for a variety of reasons. Most came for land and economic opportunities. Some groups such as Swedes came because they were unhappy with the Lutheran church. Throughout the 19th century, many Germans, Swedes, Norwegians, Danes,

What is an ethnic indicator?

How can you tell what ethnic group a person belongs to? Look at the following photographs and read the clues to find out what indicators (or signs) provide hints.

Where did you get that name?

A person's last name sometimes gives a clue about what his or her ancestors did a long time ago. What work did these folks do?

1. Baker
2. Mason
3. Miller
4. Carpenter
5. Carver
6. Priest
7. Cook

FOOD

The kitchen is a place where ethnic traditions are passed from one generation to another. Do you have any favorite ethnic recipes? Here is a popular Native American recipe.

Milkweed Soup With Dumplings

2 cups milkweed leaves
water
2 tablespoons bacon bits
dumplings: flour

Milkweed leaves are best when picked in spring or summer. The top three leaves from each plant are the best quality. Cover leaves with water and cook until tender. Add bacon bits. To make the dumplings, mix water and flour together to a thick consistency. Drop dumplings into pot and cook until dumplings thicken.

—Jewel Reddoor Wing, a Sioux Indian

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Hollanders, and Britons came to America and Iowa to farm. For much of the 1800s, Iowa land cost only $1.25 an acre. However, many people also came to start new businesses in Iowa.

Largest Ethnic Group Populations in Iowa, 1900

Germany	123,162	Denmark	17,102
Sweden	29,874	Canada	15,687
Ireland	28,321	Austria	13,118
Norway	25,634	Netherlands	9,388
England	21,027	Bohemia	9,098

Coming as families

Although some immigrants came as individuals, the majority came with other family members. In the 1850s, the typical male living in Central Iowa was married and between the ages of 25 and 45. The typical female was married and usually much younger than her husband. They had about five children.

Foreign-born people from Europe also came to Iowa in families. In the 19th century, thousands of families came from Germany, Scandinavia, Holland, and Great Britain. Sometimes a large group would immigrate and settle a new community. In 1847, about 800 people from Holland came to Marion County where they started the community of Pella. Many other communities were started by ethnic groups.

In the early 1880s, many African-Americans

Shambaugh Collection, SHSI, Iowa City

These two Amish children get a knitting lesson from their elders.

FOLK MEDICINE

Folk medicine, superstitions, and customs are also passed from one generation to another within ethnic groups. Here are some Italian folk medicine suggestions collected in Des Moines:

To relieve headaches, mash small wild onions into a paste and put on your forehead. Regular onions are good to put on your chest when you have a cold.

Another remedy for headaches is to put sliced potatoes on your forehead.

When you run out of bandages, the skin of a garlic clove makes a good one.

If you get a bruise, set a silver coin on it to get rid of it.

To stop a bleeding wound, apply a spider's web.

Joan Liffring-Zug Collection, SHSI, Iowa City

A Mexican-American mother and child in a migrant cottage on a farm near Muscatine

were recruited from Virginia to work in coal mining communities. Blacks also came to Iowa from other places in the South. They often wrote to relatives and friends back home, encouraging them to move north (read more about blacks in Iowa on page 18.) Once here, many of the newcomers set up schools and churches.

Later immigrants

Little Maria Cano shivered in the autumn night air. She was with her mother and father, the only people on the West Liberty depot platform. They had just arrived from Minnesota where her parents had worked picking beets. Maria's parents had migrated from Mexico to Minnesota in 1927, hoping to find a better way to make a living. Many years of revolution in Mexico had caused thousands of Mexicans to leave their home country. When the beet picking season ended, the Cano family moved to Iowa City, where Maria grew up with her seven brothers and sisters. She went to school in Iowa City and became an interpreter at the University of Iowa Hospitals.

Like Maria's family many immigrants from Mexico have come to Iowa in the 20th century for

POEMS AND SONGS

Welsh immigrants (from Wales) came to Iowa from the Eastern United States in the 1840s. The following decade, many Welsh miners settled near Mahaska. Today, you may still find many Iowans with Welsh roots around Red Oak, Shenandoah, Lime Springs, Iowa City, Williamsburg, and Linn Grove.

Early settlers often collected Welsh love spoons. Here is a poem from one such spoon:

"To be born Welsh
Is to be born privileged.
Not with a silver spoon
In your mouth,
But music in your blood
And poetry in your soul."

Here is a song sung by many Swedish-American children in Iowa:

"Ride, ride a broomstick
The horse's name is Blanka
Where shall you ride?
Ride away to woo.
What shall her name be?
Anna Margareta."

work. The number of Mexican immigrants increased steadily between 1910 and 1930.

Iowa's ethnic salad bowl is continuing to change. Southeast Asian immigrants began to come to Iowa in 1975 as refugees from the Vietnam War. Between 1980 and 1990 the percentage of black Iowans increased 15.3 percent. However, the biggest population jumps were Asians (+120.1 percent), Native Americans (+34.7 percent), and Hispanics (+27.8 percent). (Hispanic people are of Latin American or Spanish ancestry). In 1991, the Persian Gulf War has caused many people to leave the war-torn Middle East. New neighbors from such places may come to Iowa.

Joan Liffring-Zug Collection, SHSI, Iowa City

A Pella girl celebrates Dutch traditions at the Pella Tulip Festival.

ETHNIC STORIES

In Kimballton, Iowa, a statue of a mermaid looks out over the town. She is a copy of the famous mermaid statue that sits on a rock in the harbor of Copenhagen, Denmark. According to the Hans Christian Anderson story, "The Little Mermaid," she "painfully exchanged her fishtail for human legs, but only at the price of her beautiful voice. The prince married another and in despair the Little Mermaid leaped into the sea, only to find herself floating as a transparent being through the air with other spirits, with the promise, at least, of gaining an immortal soul."

The mermaid of the prairie was dedicated in Kimballton in 1978. Folk dancers swirled around the statue. A grand party was held to celebrate the Danish heritage of the area.

The Goldfinch Ethnic Roots Contest

1. What does it mean to be a _____ (fill in your ethnic group)?

2. What does it mean to be an Iowan?

3. What does it mean to be an American?

Photocopy or clip out the quiz (you can answer these questions on a separate sheet of paper) and send to: *The Goldfinch* Ethnic Roots Contest, we'll pick out the top three answers and publish your answer in the next issue of *The Goldfinch*.

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Tradition-Bearers

LOOK AT THE photographs below. These folks are tradition-bearers—people who know a lot about the old, or traditional ways of doing things. What ethnic indicators are shown in the pictures? Do you see any clues that might reveal what ethnic group each person belongs to?

The Danish Immigrant Museum

What is she making?

Steven Ohm

What is he holding?

Steven Ohm

What is she wearing?

Members of your family such as a parent or grandparent are also tradition-bearers. They hold many of the secret stories of your ethnic past in the form of memories. Older people you know often have vivid memories. Many people who are the age of your parents or grandparents like to remember their lives—where they grew up, where they went to school, the jobs they held, their adventures. Besides stories, tradition-bearers may also hold the secrets to making things, recipes, or ways of celebrating holidays.

In the past, storytelling often took place at work, the dinner table, ethnic clubs, churches, and synagogues. Today, young people learn about their histories at schools, festivals, and museums. Festivals such as the Nordic Fest in Decorah celebrates Norwegian traditions.

Why is it important for tradition-bearers to pass on their memories of family history? One Hmong woman, in sewing a story cloth for her children, wrote a poem explaining why:

"And they will think of me, my sewing
And I will put my name,
I will put the letters in Hmong, in English, in Lao, and in Thai.
And it will say,
'Don't forget your culture!
All your whole life,
and your children's life,
and your grandchildren's life!'"

Exploring Ethnic Traditions

What ethnic group do you belong to? What does that mean to you? To find out more about your ethnic past, you can have fun doing the following detective work.

Supplies:
index cards
pencil or pen

Mission: Ask a family member or friend who can tell you stories about your past or give you leads to other sources of information.

Assignment: On the top of an index card, write down the date and the person's name, address, phone number, date of birth, birthplace, and relationship to you. You'll probably need a number of index cards for each interview.

Information to gather from the person you are interviewing:

1. What are your parents' names?
2. What are their ethnic origins?
3. What languages do you speak? What languages do/did your parents speak?
4. What is your occupation? What were your parents' occupations?
5. What is your religion? What were your parents' religions?
6. What do you know about the origin of your last name? Do you know what it means? Did it undergo changes coming from another country to the United States?
7. What expressions or nicknames are used in your family? How did they get started?
8. What stories have come down to you about your parents? Your grandparents? Distant relatives?
9. What have you learned from your family about their childhood, schooling, jobs, and recreation?
10. What customs surround these events in your family: baptisms, bar or bat mitzvahs, courting, marriage, or raising children?
11. Can you suggest any other people I can talk to to find out more about my ethnic past?

An Italian family from Des Moines poses for a portrait. What kind of clothing are they wearing?

SHSI, Des Moines

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Changes Over Time

This family spent an evening together in America in the 1880s. What are they doing?

George Gnehlher, SHSI, Iowa City

by Elise Dawson

CAN YOU THINK of any ethnic traditions in your family? Perhaps you can't think of any right now. If you can't, you're not alone. Traditions do not remain the same. They very often change.

Why would traditions change? How do they change? Who changes them? To answer these questions you can look at your own neighborhood, and talk to your family and friends.

New homes

When immigrants came to the United States (and Iowa) they often tried to settle with people from their own country. Some towns in Iowa were settled by ethnic groups like Pella, settled by Dutch immigrants; Elk Horn, settled by Danish people, and Schleswig by Germans. Living together helped them to continue their traditions from the old country. In Davenport, a German family could read *Der Demokrat*, a German-language newspaper, and belong to the Turnverein Society, a social club. An Irish couple might attend St. Mary's Catholic Church. In Des Moines, Italian children might eat bread purchased from an Italian bakery.

However, as they became more familiar with their new homes, they began to **assimilate** [take part in or absorb] into the community. Immigrants no longer belonged to ethnic organizations. A family might have shopped at a larger grocer more often than at the nearby bakery. Churches served people from many ethnic groups instead of just one. People ate at different ethnic restaurants or with friends instead of eating traditional food at home.

SHSI Iowa City

A Methodist Church Sunday School class held a bobsled party in Wilton, Iowa, in 1906.

Spring rolls for dinner

We also are exposed to traditions from other ethnic groups. What ethnic restaurants have you eaten at? What ethnic holidays or celebrations do you take part in? This influence reflects the diverse cultures in Iowa. These traditions can be borrowed, and therefore often become part of our own family traditions. Do you decorate a Christmas tree? This idea comes from Germany. Do you like to eat egg or spring rolls for dinner? This tradition comes from China.

Sometimes traditions change because they are difficult to maintain in a new country, or as the

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SHSI, Iowa City

Family games are part of the traditions that may change over time. The Tivoli Festival celebrates Danish family traditions.

new society changes. Recipes are adapted because some ingredients are not available. A German grandmother may have made her own saurkraut, but today it takes too much time to make it from scratch. It is much easier to buy it at a grocery store. Ethnic clothing is put away. "American" clothing is worn so people can feel like they "fit in" with the crowd.

People may also lose interest in their ethnic background. A German child in Davenport did not like to eat plum dumplings, a traditional recipe. So she does not make these for her own children. Some people do not feel that their ethnic roots have importance in their lives today.

Finally, some people wished to emphasize their new lives in the United States by leaving behind old traditions. What is your last name? Is it the same name that your ancestors brought from their country? Changing names is one way people leave behind tradition. Koch might be changed to Cook. Smith might have been Schmidt. First names are also changed. A father might be named Josef, but the son could be named Joseph.

Now that you know what to look for, you can investigate your own changing family traditions. With the help of your family and friends you have many exciting discoveries to make. You may even find some traditions that you wish to start again!

German-Americans in World War I

During World War I (1914-1918), many people became afraid of immigrants. Because the United States was at war with Germany, some people were concerned that German-Americans would sympathize with Germany instead of the United States.

In Iowa, laws were passed requiring people to speak only English. This meant that some people could no longer use the language that they understood best. German-Americans also had to buy Liberty Bonds to support the U.S. war efforts. Sometimes they were forced to take part in patriotic celebrations. In Davenport, some German books were burned. Occasionally, German-Americans were victims of beatings.

Not all people thought that immigrants would be disloyal to their new country. They pointed out that many German-Americans were serving in the military. However, the new laws were still enforced.

These events had a long lasting affect on German traditions in Iowa. Following the war few families continued to speak German and many other customs were lost.

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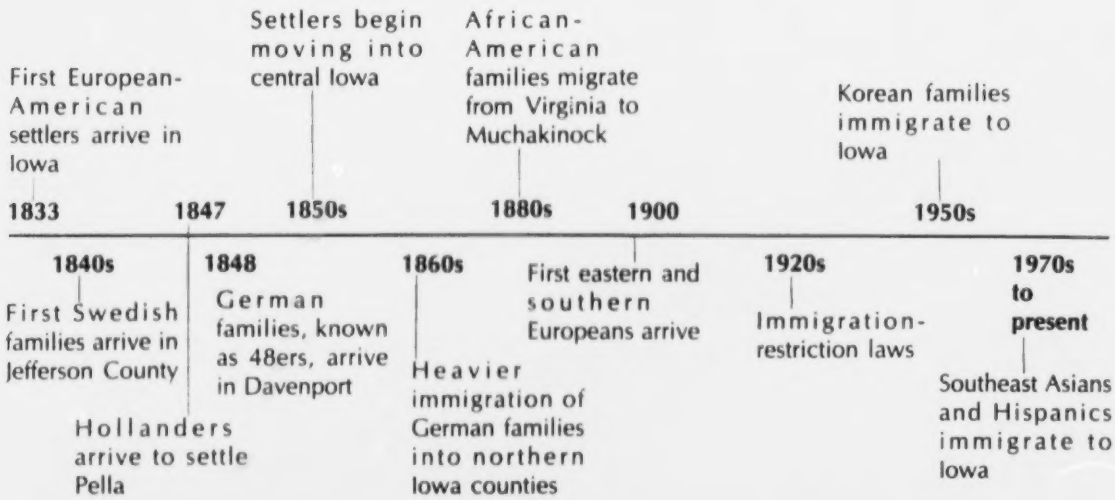
Wild Rosie's Timeline

Native Americans such as the Mesquakie and Omaha Indians lived in Iowa before European-American settlers arrived. As the territory opened up to settlement in the 19th century, people from all over the United States and the world moved to Iowa. Even today people such as Southeast Asians are still immigrating to Iowa.

Can you do this pop quiz? Look at the timeline. Answer the following questions by filling in the blanks after the questions. (Answers on page 30.)



1. When did the first European-Americans arrive in Iowa?

2. Where did the first 48ers live?

3. Where did African-American families come from?

4. Which ethnic group came to Iowa first—Germans or Hispanics?

5. When did a large number of Southeast Asians immigrate to Iowa?

Danish Folk Art

TRADITIONAL ETHNIC artists usually learn how to make things from a different person. They often do not use patterns from books to make things such as wood carvings, quilts, or needlework. Often times, ethnic groups have their own kinds of folk art.

Meet three ethnic artists who sew, bake, and carve Danish folk art:

Hilda Christoffersen's parents immigrated from Denmark to Kimballton, Iowa, where she was born in 1905. Her mother was a seamstress. Hilda began tatting (a form of needlework) at the age of seven, and began doing cutwork and Swedish weaving when she was about 15 years of age.

She is one of a very few people who does cutwork lace in Iowa. Cutwork lace is used for household linens. It is made by outlining a design with a button hole stitch and then cutting away parts of the background fabric between the designs.

Emma Hansen learned to cook from her Danish mother, Kristina Jacobsen Kirk. Every Saturday Hansen's mother "would bake cinnamon rolls—to have something for company on Sunday. Mother was so good in cooking," said Hansen.

On one of the first Christmases she could remember, her gift was "a wonderful little red tin stove." She loved her toy stove and began to cook Danish food with her mother.

Hansen makes those same cinnamon rolls today in addition to other Danish specialties. The tradition of preparing Danish foods is still important, said Hansen: "There's something there that you always tie . . . to your family no matter how old you get."

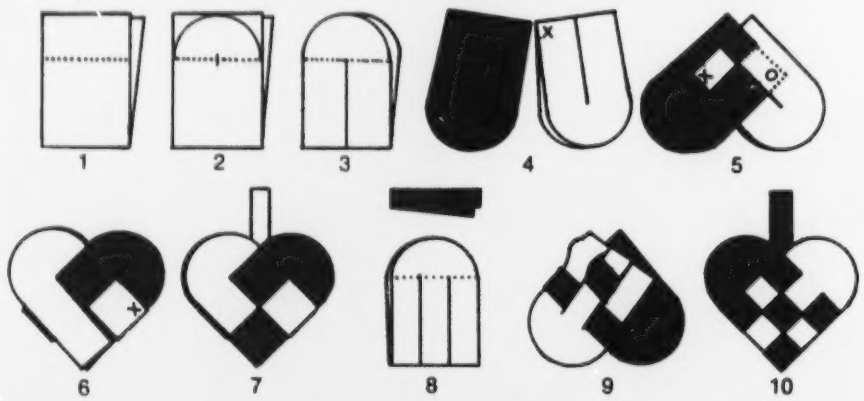
Steven Olsen

Viggo Neilsen of Kimballton, Iowa, always wanted to be a carpenter. He was born in Denmark in 1905 and came to America in 1925. Those first years were spent working on farms in Iowa, North and South Dakota and Montana, at a dairy in California, and for a logging camp in Oregon.

He began carving wood whenever he could in his free time. He carved pieces from the memories of his childhood in Denmark. His tools are simple—a pocket knife and a file. Besides carving figures, he has made small tables and a clock from small pieces of cedar and walnut.

Lisa Steen Riggs of Elk Horn, Iowa, makes heart baskets. She learned the craft from her grandmother who emigrated from Denmark at the age of 12. "She always made the fancy ones and never had two that looked alike," said Riggs. "We never had names for them except Danish heart baskets."

Make your own heart baskets



Red-and-white paper hearts hang as decorations in many Danish-American homes in Iowa. The traditional Danish paper heart is red and white, the colors of Denmark's flag. Many people use them as holiday decorations. But you can make a paper heart any time of the year! They make great gifts or room decorations.

Follow the steps below to make your own braided hearts:

Supplies:
1 piece red paper, 1 piece white paper
scissors
pencil
ruler
drinking cup or glass
tape or glue

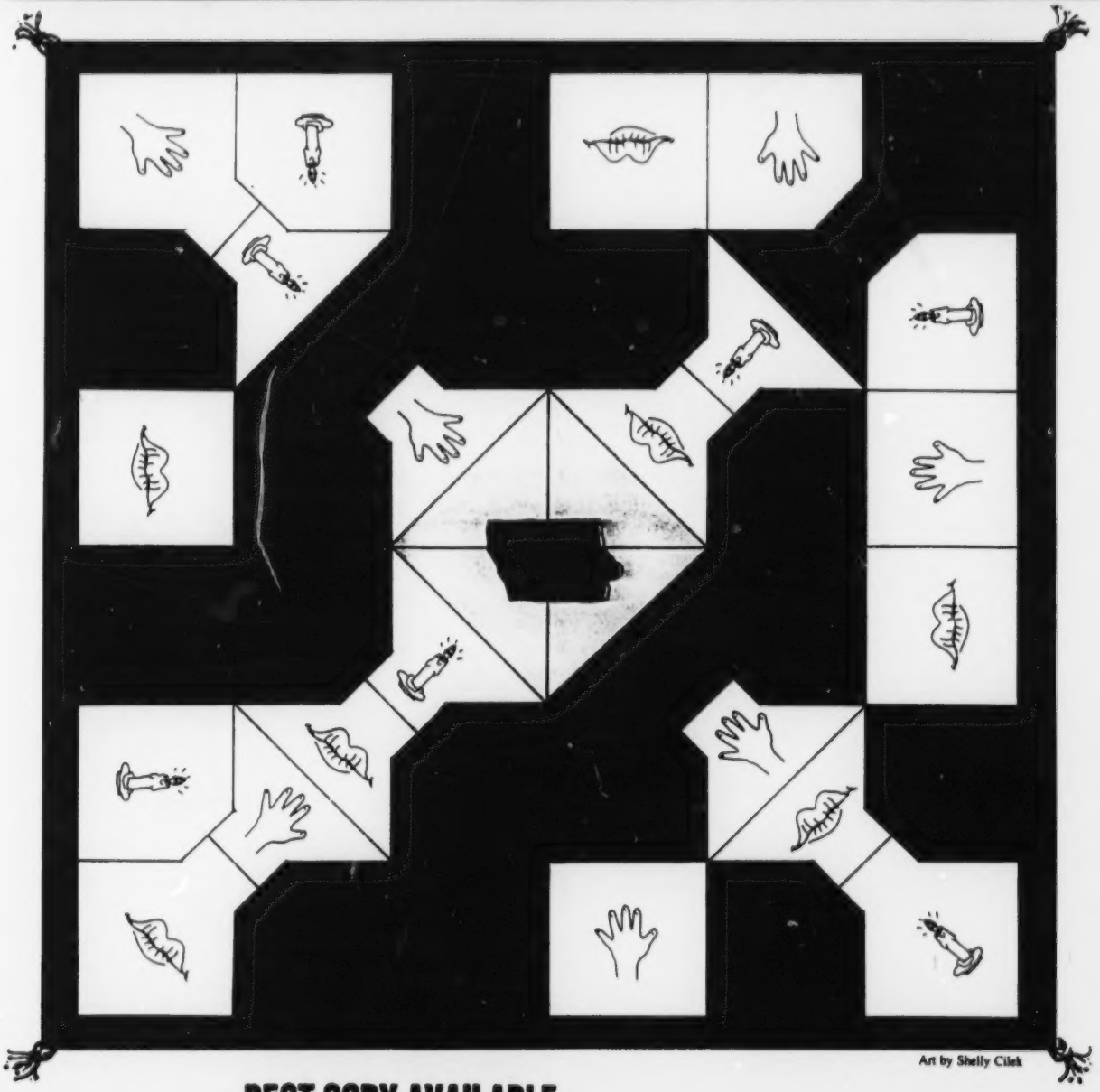
1. Fold 2 pieces of colored paper. From the fould upwards, mark off a square (shown below as a broken line).
2. Taking the top of the square, draw a semi-circle above the square by tracing around a drinking cup or glass. Cut off the corner pieces.
3. In the two folded pieces of paper, cut from the exact middle of the fold up to the top edge of the square.
4. Slide the flap (marked "x" in the drawing) through and—gently—hook it over the unused flap on the left-hand half of the heart. The other flap is now hooked over the flap marked "o," and slid between the parts of the second flap on the left-hand half of the heart.
7. The heart is now finished. Cut out and glue or tape a paper handle.

8 and 9. A slightly more complicated heart can be made by cutting twice in from the fold, an equal distance apart. First you weave one flap: hook over, in between, hook over. Then the second: in between, hook over, in between. The third flap is woven in the same way as the first.

10. Cut out and glue or tape a paper handle.

Delectably Danish, Penfield Press
Drawing by Esther Feske

Iowa's Ethnic Search Game



Art by Shelly Cilek

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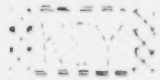
1. For two to four players
2. Begin by rolling a die to see who goes first.
3. Use coins as tokens and begin on the Iowa map.
4. On the first move, each player will either land on a category or "roll again." If you answer the question correctly, you may roll the die and move that many spaces. You can move in any direction. If you don't answer correctly, it's the next player's turn.
5. You may wish to photocopy the cards to the right.
6. Answers are found within this issue of *The Goldfinch* (see page 30). Some of the questions do not have specific answers.
7. To win the game, you must answer correctly at least one question in each of the four categories, then move to the Iowa map and answer a question chosen from any category by an opponent.



= Oral traditions (stories, songs, jokes, music)

= Things you make with your hands

= Family life

= Celebrations

Family life

1. The largest immigrant group to come to Iowa in 1900 in families came from what country?
2. The second largest immigrant group in 1900 came from what country?
3. Refugee families from what part of the world have been coming to Iowa since the 1970s?
4. List two last names that describe a person's occupation.
5. When did African-American families begin moving to Iowa?
6. What does assimilate mean?
7. Name two reasons why ethnic family traditions might change.

Oral traditions

1. Name one room in the house where oral traditions are passed on?
2. What kind of medicine do people hear about word-of-mouth.
3. Welsh Iowans put poems on what household item?
4. Name the Iowa town with a mermaid.
5. What country does the original Little Mermaid come from?
6. During what war was a law passed in Iowa requiring people to speak only English?
7. List three questions you could ask a person about his/her ethnic background.

Celebrations

1. What is a celebration?
2. Name two family celebrations.
3. What ethnic holidays do you celebrate?
4. What does the festival in Pella celebrate?
5. What is the Tivoli festival?
6. Name the annual Mesquakie celebration held each August.
7. What does the Nordic Fest in Decorah celebrate?

Things you make with your hands

1. What is a tradition-bearer?
2. Name three items that are mentioned as folk art.
3. What is your favorite ethnic food?
4. Name three places where you might learn how to make something with your hands.
5. Red-and-white paper hearts come from what country?
6. What is paj ntaub (pan dow)?
7. Who makes paj ntaub?

In a Coal Mining Town Called "Muchy"

by Mark Meacham

THE NAME "MUCHAKINOCK" (much-a-KI-nock) is a Native American word meaning "hard to cross." It is also the name that was given to one of Iowa's coal mining communities. Its meaning is said to have come from a creek nearby. The miners and their families often referred to the community as "Muchy."

Muchakinock was located in Mahaska County between Oskaloosa and the Des Moines River. In the late 1800s it was one of Iowa's largest coal mining communities and a major settlement for African-Americans. The Consolidation Coal Company owned it and many other coal mines in the area.

In 1881 the coal company bosses decided to change the way they paid the European-American miners at Muchy. The miners didn't like that. So they went on **strike** [stopped working]. In order to keep the mine working, the Consolidation Coal Company hired a local black business man, Hobe Armstrong, to travel to Virginia and persuade blacks to work in the Iowa mine. The black miners would be hired as **strikebreakers** [worker hired to take the place of someone on strike]. They would have to work for wages much lower than the European-American miners that had gone on strike. Job opportunities such as this were few for blacks, so many black Americans came to Muchy. Many traveled all the way from Virginia in railroad cars. Once they were hired, they worked very hard as coal miners.

By 1895 their success allowed them to start new businesses and begin new organizations—drug stores, a law office, the Y.M.C.A., and local lodges were only a few. But mining was the largest business in Muchy. So most men were miners.

A street scene from the coal mining town Buxton

SHSI, Des Moines

Birds Eye View, Buxton, Iowa. From the South.

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SHSI, Des Moines

An ice cream social held in Buxton about 1910

Dangerous working conditions

The miner's job was hard. The hours were long and the working conditions dangerous. Before the sun came up, the typical miner was already walking to work. He would have his miner's hat on. It was a protective hat with a lamp connected to the bill. In addition to lighting his way in the coal mines, it lit his way to work in the early hours before dawn.

When he got to the mine, the miner took an elevator, called the cage, down to his workplace. His workplace looked like a large room. It was 24 to 30 feet wide and 120 to 150 feet long. It was the miner's job to put the coal in coal carts so it could be hauled to the surface.

But first, the miner would test the ceiling to see if it was loose. He would tap it with his miner's pick. He could tell if it was loose by the way it felt. If so, he would brace it with timbers until the ceiling was secured. Then the miner would begin collecting the coal that had been blown from the walls the day before.

Every evening before he went home, the miner would find a spot where the coal was thick and drill a hole for dynamite. He would put the dynamite in the hole and light it. This would blow the coal out of the walls. It was dangerous because the explosion could cause a fire.

When the miner finished working for the day it was dark. He was covered in coal dust. At night, he and his family often went to Muchakinock's **company store** [a store owned by the coal company that sold merchandise to the miners and their families] to relax with their friends and hear about news in the mine.

Many of the women had had a long hard day as well, tending the gardens, buying food and clothing, and working for the local churches. So they also were tired and ready to relax. All enjoyed these visits.

And the next day the miners would wake before dawn, put their hats on, go back to work loading the coal, and send it to the surface.

The end of Muchy

Muchakinock was a prosperous coal mining community throughout the late 1800s. It wasn't until 1898 that the coal mines were at the point of being **worked out** [the coal runs out and the mine is abandoned]. When the Consolidation Coal Company realized Muchy was running out of coal they bought land in Monroe County and set up a new mining community called Buxton.

The move began in 1900. The houses in Muchy were taken apart, loaded onto railroad cars, and moved to Buxton. By 1905, Muchy was deserted. And the black community that prospered so much in Muchy relocated to Buxton. They continued a tradition of hard working miners and prosperous business people.

Coal mining wheel game

Start at the top of the wheel with the letter T, go clockwise around and write down every other letter. Find five items that you would find in an early Iowa coal mining community. (Answers on page 30.)

T I S N Y E R O L I S M V B X E Y R R S M C N A Y G Q E V C L H L U A R E C I H O S U T P O M R N E X M L I

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

From Town to Town:
Jewish settlers in Iowa

by Jean Florman

MANY ETHNIC GROUPS settled in Iowa to farm its rich land, but not everyone who came here wanted to be a farmer. Beginning in 1848, most Jewish settlers moved to the new towns being built along Iowa's rivers. In communities along the Mississippi, Des Moines, Iowa, and Missouri Rivers, many Jewish settlers sold shoes, clothes, food, and supplies or worked as teachers, doctors, and lawyers.

Almost all the Jews who moved to Iowa before

The Katz family, a Jewish family, pose outside their home in Osage about 1914.

SHSI, Iowa City

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Bud Lewis

Moses Bloom's Clothing Store in Iowa City

1900 were emigrants from Germany. They left Germany because of **anti-Semitism** [hatred of Jews], and they hoped to be able to practice their Jewish religion and customs in peace in the United States.

Most of these early Jewish immigrants were middle class business people. They wanted to preserve their special Jewish heritage, but they also participated in the other cultural activities and politics of their towns.

In 1858, for example, Moses Bloom opened a clothing store in Iowa City, where it quickly became a successful business. Signs on his "One Price Clothing House" in 1864 advertised "Furnishing Hats and Goods, Clothing and Tailoring Merchant." Bloom served as mayor of Iowa City for two years, and later was elected to the state legislature.

Another Jewish family became well-known merchants, first in Keokuk and later in Des Moines. Lytton, Samuel, and Marcus Younkers started Younkers Department Stores in 1856 in Keokuk.

New Jewish immigrants

By 1878, about 1,000 Jews had settled in Iowa. During the late 1800s, the number of Jews in Iowa increased to 3,000. Some of these new Iowans had been born here, but many had immigrated from cities in the eastern United States or Europe.

In the early 1900s, many more Jews arrived in Iowa, but their customs and histories were different from the German Jews who had settled here earlier. Most of these "new" Jewish immigrants were from Eastern Europe, especially Russia. They spoke the Yiddish language and practiced a stricter form of religion than the earlier Jewish settlers. The new arrivals wanted to maintain their language and customs, rather than become "Americanized."

There were many differences between the first German Jews and the later Russian Jews who moved to Iowa. But both groups tried to work together to preserve their Jewish heritage. They organized many social groups, including men's clubs, youth groups, women's societies, and political organizations to help people from Jewish backgrounds get together for fun. Members of the groups also helped one another adjust to their new American homes.

Rising population

By 1916, the Jewish population of the state had risen from 3,000 to 9,000. Many of the European Jews fleeing Russia in the early 1900s wanted to settle in eastern U.S. cities. New York, Boston, and Philadelphia, however, were overcrowded with European immigrants. In order to relieve these cities and to help the new Jewish immigrants find work, several programs helped them settle in the Midwest. The Galveston Project brought immigrant Joseph Braverman to Texas, and then helped him travel from there to a new job in Davenport. Later, Braverman journeyed to Iowa City where he established the Agudas Acheim Synagogue.

Between 1905 and 1923, another program helped 1,000 Jews living in eastern cities to find work in Iowa towns. One man who came to Iowa through this program wrote back to the people who had helped him. "I tank you very much for sending me hear as I worked my self up purty good. I am runing a shoe shop of my owne and keep employed two more men. I can youse one more. If you have a good shoemaker send him down here and I wil try my best for him. I will try and pay him back what you al done for me." Because this man was still learning English, his spelling was not perfect.

Visiting each other

As many as 500 to 1,000 Jews were also settled on Iowa farms between 1905 and 1920. Most Jewish immigrants, however, still moved to towns and cities. Not every small town had a synagogue or rabbi to perform religious ceremonies, however. So for important religious holidays, Jewish businessmen in small towns would close up their shops, pack their families into wagons, trains, or cars, and travel to the larger cities. Jewish families in Waterloo, Davenport, Des Moines, and Sioux City would welcome their small-town relatives and friends for the several days of Rosh Hashanah or Passover holidays.

During the warmer months, Jewish families living in small towns also visited each other on the weekends. Visiting helped keep alive their special Jewish beliefs and social activities. "We would wait for the spring thaw and for the mud to dry," said one woman about her childhood Sundays, "and then we would start going from town to town to see everyone again."

SHSI, Iowa City

Helen and Bernice Katz play at home.

Strong Ties

Office of Refugee Programs

These new Southeast Asian immigrants arrive in Des Moines.

by Jean Florman

DURING THE 1800S, Iowa was seen as a "land of opportunity" by many ethnic groups. Thousands of people came to the Midwest to improve their lives by farming, trading, and building new towns. Not all settlers who wanted a better life came to Iowa in the last century. Some arrived just a few years ago.

The Tai Dam (tie dom) of Vietnam began arriving in Iowa in 1975. The Tai Dam **refugees** [people who flee their own country because of war] had been invited to resettle in Iowa by Governor Robert Ray. They originally were from northwestern Vietnam. Between 1954 and 1975, war in Vietnam forced many of them to flee to the nearby countries of Laos and Thailand. Another ethnic group, the Hmong (mung) originally of China who migrated to Laos, also fled to refugee camps in Thailand.

"I dropped my tears"

Khao Baccam remembers his family trying to escape the fighting in Vietnam when he was seven years old. "My parents moved me frequently, fleeing from war and **persecution** [being badly treated because of your beliefs]. I did not know where we were going. I just held onto my mother's hand and she kept on dragging me along."

Khao's family settled in Laos, where they remained for 21 years. After war started in Laos, Khao and his family fled to Thailand. In 1975, they settled in Iowa. Over 2600 Tai Dam refugees are now settled here.

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Many of the refugees from Vietnam and Laos escaped in overcrowded boats. Khao had to leave everything but $100 behind. By the time he arrived in Iowa, he had "nothing at all." Other refugees even had to leave some members of their family behind. One Lo Thi tells how her daughter and four grandchildren "didn't get to come along [from Laos to Thailand] because [the person helping us escape] was in a hurry and couldn't get them all. I dropped my tears crossing [the Mekong River]."

Coming to Iowa

Individuals, families, communities, or church groups in Iowa "sponsored" Tai Dam families. When One Lo Thi and her husband Vong Lo Van arrived in Iowa, their relatives and their sponsors helped them find a home, get health checkups, study English, and find jobs. Vong detassled corn near Mt. Pleasant and studied writing, reading, and speaking for eight hours a day.

Relatives brought silverware, linens, and clothing to the couple. Unlike the Vong's home in Laos, their house in Iowa has running water, electricity, heat, air conditioning, and a refrigerator.

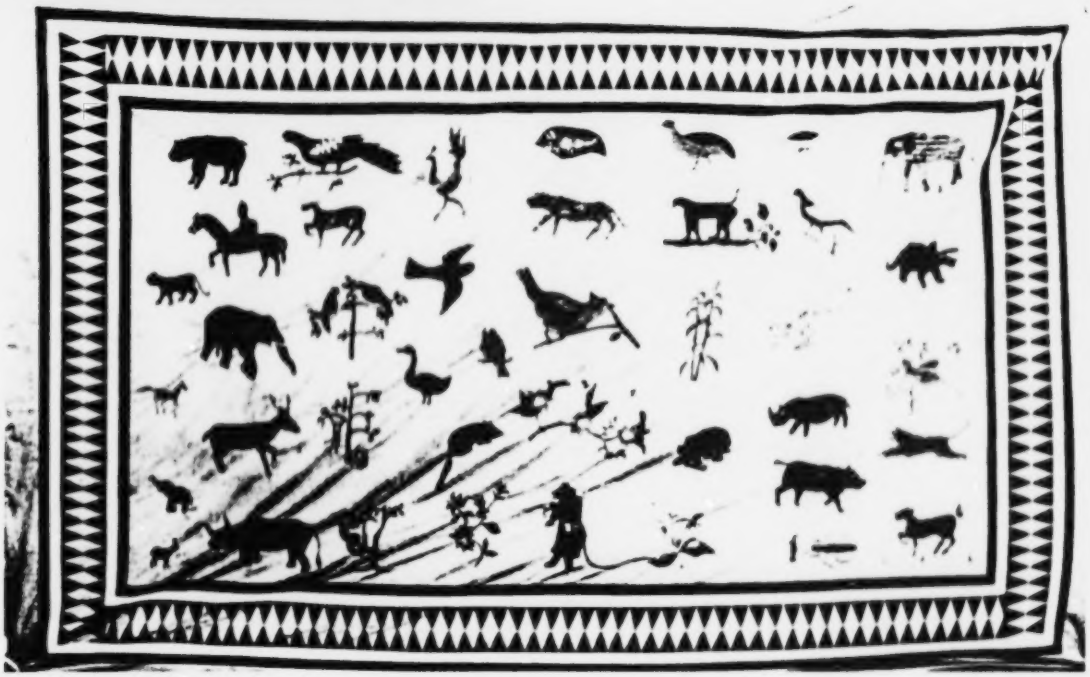
Life is easier and more peaceful in Iowa, but many Tai Dam immigrants miss their friends, relatives, and the customs of their homeland. "I was lucky to have the chance to come and live here," says Khao Baccam. But he adds that his "memories in the homeland . . . make me think and miss home."

Older Tai Dam immigrants like One Lo Thi worry that, "However happy we are, we can't forget our people over there [in Vietnam and Laos]. Younger generations, five or ten years from now, might not know, not understand all these things." Tai Dam immigrants want their children to learn the Tai Dam language and customs, and to keep alive the stories of their parents' struggles.

"We have stronger social ties, a stronger love and cooperation than Americans," says One Lo Van. His wife adds, "The love between the Tai Dam [can't be thrown away.]"

A young Southeast Asian immigrant

Story Cloth



You'll need: construction paper, scissors, and paste.

Steps:

1. Look at the photograph of the story cloth made by Shoua Her. Study the pattern of the border.
2. You can create this pattern by cutting out shapes and glueing them on pieces of paper.

One kind of traditional art that the Hmong create is called paj ntaub (pan dow). It is a form of sewn and embroidered cloth. Often girls are taught by their mother or an older female relative to make large paj ntaub. These often tell family stories. Teen-agers become very skilled at making the cloths.

You can make a picture frame out of colored construction paper, by adapting the methods used by the Hmong.

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Wild Rosie's Ethnic Map

Iowa has been home to people from all over the world. Iowa opened up for European settlement in 1833. Immigrants from northern Europe and Great Britain soon crossed the Mississippi River to settle in Iowa. What other ethnic groups does the map highlight?

Rosie's map shows the major ethnic groups in Iowa. Not every ethnic group is shown, including the Tai Dam and Hmong. Can you draw a symbol for these Iowans from Southeast Asia? Look at the map to find the area where you live. What ethnic groups live near you? Are there any others you could add?

Key

N S D

- Scandinavian (Norwegian, Swedish, Danish)
- German (Amish, Amanas, Swiss Amish, Mennonite)
- Irish
- English
- Dutch
- Czech
- Scottish
- Welsh
- French (Icarians)
- Italian
- Native American (Mesquakie)
- African-American
- Hungarian

Disk Detective

Art by Jerry Brown

by Jean E. Wulf

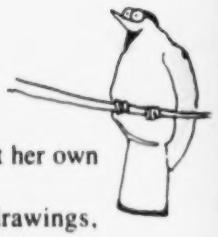
Wild Rosie is searching for clues to her ethnic past. To find out more about her family's roots, she will fill out a family tree. A family tree is a way of seeing how your family is related to you.

To create your own family tree, Load BASIC on an Apple IIe or IIc (with an 80-character screen) or an IBM Personal Computer this program. (NOTE: Type in all characters below as shown.)

```
10 PRINT TAB(57)">>>>_____"
20 PRINT TAB(39)">>>>_____<<<"
TAB(61)"GREAT-GRAND FATHER"
30 PRINT TAB(35)">>>>"TAB(43)"GRAND
FATHER"TAB(57)">>>>_____"
40 PRINT TAB(31)">>>>"TAB(61)"GREAT-
GRANDMOTHER"
50 PRINT TAB(16)">>>>_____<<<"
60 PRINT TAB(15)">"SPC(5)"FATHER"SPC(4)
">>>>"
70 PRINT TAB(14)">"TAB(35)">>>>"TAB(57)
">>>>"TAB(61)"_____"
80 PRINT TAB(13)">"TAB(39)">>>>_____
<<<"TAB(61)"GREAT-GRANDFATHER"
90 PRINT TAB(12)">"TAB(43)"GRAND
MOTHER"TAB(57)">>>>_____"
100 PRINT TAB(11)">"TAB(61)"GREAT-GRAND
MOTHER"
110 PRINT "_____"
120 PRINT "YOUR NAME"SPC(1)">"
130 PRINT TAB(12)">"TAB(57)">>>>_____"
140 PRINT TAB(13)">"TAB(39)">>>>_____
<<<"TAB(61)"GREAT-GRANDFATHER"
150 PRINT TAB(14)">"TAB(35)">>>>"TAB(43)
"GRANDFATHER"TAB(57)">>>>_____"
160 PRINT TAB(15)">"TAB(31)">>>>"TAB(61)
"GREAT-GRANDMOTHER"
170 PRINT TAB(16)">>>>_____<<<"
180 PRINT TAB(21)"MOTHER"SPC(4)">>>>"
190 PRINT TAB(35)">>>>"TAB(57)">>>>
_____"
200 PRINT TAB(39)">>>>____<<<"TAB(61)
"GREAT-GRANDFATHER"
210 PRINT TAB(43)"GRANDMOTHER"TAB(57)
">>>>_____"
220 PRINT TAB(61)"GREAT-GRANDMOTHER"
230 END
RUN
```

After writing in the names of your ancestors, you might want to list the states or countries they were born in and when they came to Iowa on a separate sheet of paper.

History Makers



Be a history maker! *The Goldfinch* wants to hear about your discoveries in Iowa's history.

The following essay was written by Sarah Schmitz, 11, of Riverside, Iowa, about her own ethnic past.

If you have any stories, poems, drawings, please send them to us so we can print them in future issues of The Goldfinch!

From Bohemia to Iowa
by Sarah Schmitz

I tried to find my best dress so I could wear it to my great grandma's 100th birthday. I was hoping that it would be fun. All of a sudden I heard a call from downstairs.

"Sarah, time to go!" my mom shouted. My dad started the car and we were off to Waucoma.

Everybody was in the church basement. I said "hi" to all my aunts and uncles and gave them hugs. I ate and enjoyed, but I wanted to spend more time with my great grandma alone. I walked over to where she was sitting.

"Grandma, will you tell me about your mom and dad and about life when you were little like me?"

"Yes, Sarah. This is how it began: My mother and father [John and Anna Barloon] set sail on a journey from Prague, Bohemia [present-day Czechoslovakia] to a place called America. They came with Anna's entire family in 1854.

"On the boat Anna gave birth to her first baby, Joseph, and along with him came his stillborn twin brother, who was buried at sea. After many months at sea, they finally spotted land. They landed at Quebec, Canada. They settled on a small fruit farm. They quickly learned English and made friends with their French neighbors.

"Anna's two sisters left Canada to settle in Iowa. It was their wish that their sister Anna came with her family to Iowa also. Their wish came true in 1865 when the Barloons came to Iowa and settled in a thickly wooded place by Fort Atkinson. The Civil War was coming to an end. Later they homesteaded a farm near Spillville, Iowa. Later they bought a farm near Fort Atkinson. At this farm, another of my brothers was born. My parents named him Albert. On August 28, 1887, I was born, Alice Catherine, their first daughter. We were joined by two more brothers and two sisters, Edith, Frank, Louis, and Lydia.

"When I was young like you I had to work real hard. I got up early every morning and brought in water from the well. I also helped Albert with morning chores. After breakfast my sister Edith and I got the horse and buggy ready to go to our Catholic school in Spillville. When I got home I always had extra chores to do. I fed the animals and then I ran for water. My mother and I would fix dinner and heat the cold water over the woodburning stove for dishes and for baths.

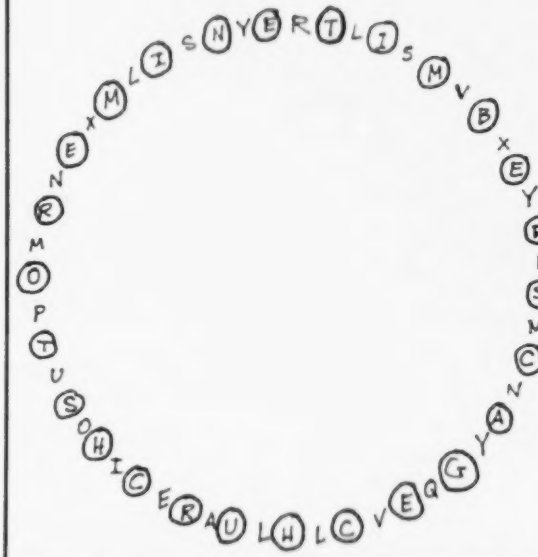
"When I was a young lady I had a very dear friend, Nellie Kurash. Sometimes we had big house parties and played games. As I spent more and more time at Nellie's house I met and got to know my first husband, Albert Kurash. Soon Albert asked for my hand in marriage. Albert and I lived with Albert's parents until we bought a farm near Jackson, Minnesota. On the farm we had our first child, Celia. We longed to go back to Iowa because we missed our families so much. We moved all our machines by train. We homesteaded a new farm [in Iowa]. . . .

"[After 1918] the last member of the family was born, Lorraine, your grandmother."

"Thank you for telling me this story, and happy birthday, Great Grandma," I said as I left the party.

Art by Jerry Brown

Answers



Page 13: (1) 1833; (2) Davenport; (3) Virginia; (4) Germans; (5) 1970s to present.

Page 17: Family Life: (1) Germans; (2) Sweden; (3) Southeast Asians; (4) see page 4; (5) 1900; (6) to take on the characteristics of another culture; (7) answers will vary, see article on page 10.
Celebrations: (1) answers will vary, a special occasion; (2) answers will vary, examples—Thanksgiving or the 4th of July; (3) answers will vary; (4) tulips, Dutch traditions; (5) Danish traditions; (6) Powwow; (7) Norwegian traditions.
Oral traditions: (1) answers may vary, kitchen, for example; (2) folk medicine; (3) spoons; (4) Kimballton; (5) Denmark; (6) World War I; (7) see page 9.
Things you make with your hands: (1) person who passes on family and/or ethnic traditions; (2) tatting or sewing, baking, wood carving; (3) answers may vary; (4) books, school, tradition-bearer; (5) Denmark; (6) story cloth; (7) Southeast Asian, specifically Hmong.

Page 20: (1) timbers; (2) cage; (3) church; (4) school; (5) mine.

History mystery (back cover): A Tai Dam woman demonstrates how to use a weaving loom. It is constructed from parts brought over from Laos and parts purchased in Iowa.

Art by Jerry Brown

"Hi! I'm Wild Rosie! Here to welcome you to our new cartoon strip called 'The Roost.' Goldie the Goldfinch and I hang out together here and talk about the stories that appear in each issue of *The Goldfinch*. Did you know that my name comes from the state flower of Iowa—the Wild Rose?"

"Guess where my name comes from? I'm named after the state bird of Iowa. I'm Goldie the Goldfinch and I love to fly around these pages."

LOOK, GOLDIE! SOMETHING'S LANDING OVER THERE!!
CHUG CHUG CHUG
WOW!
ZOWEE! WHAT ARE YOU CREATURES?
I'M ROSIE AND THIS IS GOLDIE
YOU TWO SURE DON'T LOOK ALIKE
WE'RE NOT. ROSIE'S A LITTLE GIRL AND I'M A GOLDFINCH
HOW CAN YOU GET ALONG WITH EACH OTHER IF YOU DON'T LOOK THE SAME?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK THE SAME TO BE FRIENDS
HOLY COW! WHAT A CONCEPT
IF YOU'LL BE MY FRIENDS, I'LL LET YOU RIDE IN MY SPACE BUGGY
SOUNDS GREAT! BUT WE'D BE YOUR FRIENDS ANYWAY
JERRY BROWN

Art by Jerry Brown

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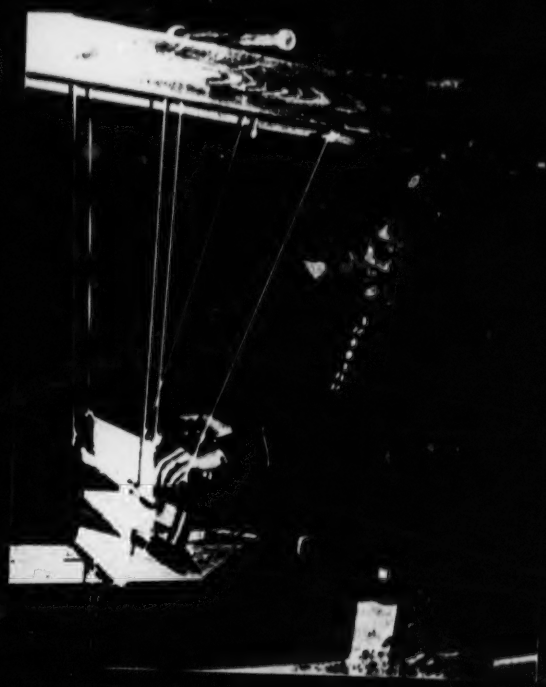
History Mystery

Who is this woman and what is she doing?
Hint: She comes from a country in Southeast Asia. Read more about why she and other people have come to Iowa in this issue of *The Goldfinch*.

Attention Librarians and Teachers: An index for *The Goldfinch* is now available. Write or call 319 335 3916 for information.



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